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**A PILOT STUDY ON AWARENESS AND USE LIBRARY SERVICES AMONG  
POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN NIGERIA**

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## **Abstract**

*The library plays a vital role in academic institution in providing information services and resources to support users in their studies and research activities. This study investigates Library Services and Usage among Postgraduate Students in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey method. Fifty-five questionnaires were distributed in which 45 were returned. This represents 81% Random sampling technique was used to select the respondents from each of the colleges. The result revealed that the postgraduate students are aware of the various services provided by the library. Borrowing services are the major service that the post graduate students patronize most and email and internet services are the ICT services that are most used. Based on the findings of the study, the study recommends that user's satisfaction assessment needs to be encouraged. In addition, the library management should frequently organize training program on effective use of library services. This study contributes to literature, policy and practice particularly in the use of library services.*

**Keyword:** *pilot study, library services, awareness postgraduate students, university, Abeokuta.*

## **Introduction**

Education serves as the bedrock of every society and for effective educational system, the library is established to support teaching, learning and research activities of its parent institution. The role of the library in human development cannot be over emphasized because the library promotes accurate and timely information for its users. The library serves as the ‘heart’ of every academic environment, based on the fact that a library is an avenue for users to have access to research materials and other relevant information resources. This implies that for effective academic activities to take place, there is need for a well-equipped academic library in order to ensure healthy educational system (Hammed, 2010).

The university library needs to create a conducive environment that will entice the users in visiting the library for their information needs. Gama (2013) opined that library users have equal access to information resources and the library gives opportunity to users to learn individually in area of information interest. The library assists the users in their academic achievement and also prepares individual for productivity in their employment. According to Nwalo (2003), the library users are undisputedly, the most important component in any library environment because the mission of every academic library is to provide excellent services to the users.

Academic library plays a vital role in every institution, by offering services to postgraduate students, researchers and other users. The role of academic library is to provide and maintain standard intellectual resources that will stimulate users’ interest in promoting and adding value to such institution. Hisle (2002) submitted that, academic libraries support new users by providing them with appropriate services and resources, whether they are distant education students or those involved in new teaching and learning methods. The relationship between effective teaching, learning and research activities in academic library can be attributed to the effective library services being rendered in the library environments to various users, (Nkiko, Idigbyen-Ose and Segun-Adeniran, 2015).

## **Literature Review**

An academic library is established to render information services to its community through provision of information resources that supports learning, teaching and research. Buhari (2016)) stated that the objectives of academic libraries are to encourage the advancement of learning, to provide course of instruction and other facilities for the pursuit of such learning, to promote and conduct research in all fields of learning and human endeavor and to undertake any other activities appropriate for a university of the highest standard. According to Barker-Mathews and Costello, (2011), the library is highly regarded as the heart and brain box of the intellectual activities of the university. In the same vein, Brown and Malenfant(2015) asserted that the quality of a university is measured by the services provided by the library because of its unique position in the over-all system. Salman, Mostert and Mugwisi, (2013) opined that if library users do not have their needs met, they may fail to achieve their goals and this will serve as a detriment to library, because it fails to satisfy its users' information needs. Library patrons desire a quality service provided in a friendly and courteous manner.

Library service comprises of all package of activities which the library renders to the users in order to enhance and achieve the goals of the parent institution(Xia, 2016). These services can be rendered manually or through digital process. The services are Circulation services, Reference, Online databases, OPAC, Internet service. Selective dissemination of information, current awareness services, document delivery services, bibliography services, inter-library loan services, indexing and abstracting services, reprographic services. library orientation services, user education services, knowledge management services, information media literacy, archiving services, preservation services, translation services, consultancy services, among others(Madukoma, 2011). It is imperative for the library management to always improve the quality of services to satisfy the modern information needs of the users. Carrying out frequent survey on library services users can enable the management to identify the strength and weakness of services rendered in the library, and then develop new methods to improve services that will satisfy users information needs (Brown and Malenfant, 2015).

Availability of library information sources has great influence on library use. Availability is the simple most important determinant of the overall extent to which an information channel is used. Both availability and technical quality influence the selection of first choice. Once books and

other information services are available in the library for use, the library user is satisfied as his information needs are likely to be met. The user develops a positive attitude towards the library, on the other hand, unavailability of information sources leads to user dissatisfaction. Which serves as factor that affects the use of the library services, (Al-bahrani, 2009).

There are various factors affecting the use of library services. A number of factors affecting the use of academic library services include non-availability of current library materials, library location, age of collection, erratic power supply, poor library instruction, and user education, UKIH (2012).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Libraries are service-oriented organisations established for provision of relevant information and quality services to meet users' information needs. There is no doubt that, no university system can achieve its educational goals without sound library services. Library services can be rendered in print, non-print, and electronic format. The purpose of establishing library is defeated if the users see no reasons or not aware of various services that can be access to benefit users' information needs. The university library needs to provide various services that will motivate users to have value for visiting the library and at the same time meet the information needs of users.

In Nigeria, it is observed that most universities are striving to provide adequate library services to satisfy users' information needs. Ishola and Obadare (2014) revealed that there is high level of available library services in Nigeria university libraries. It is observed that there is problem of underutilization of these services and resources. It has been observed that despite the huge amount of fund the university library used to acquire various services for users, there is poor users' patronage in the library services. Identifying the reasons for poor patronage will enable the library to ascertain the strength and weakness of services rendered to users and this will assist library management to proffer solution to the problems identify'.

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate reasons for poor usage of library services by postgraduate students, looking on library use among postgraduate students in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta.

## **Objectives of the Study**

1. To identify awareness of services available to postgraduate students in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta.
2. Investigate the frequency of use of the library services by postgraduates' students in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta
3. Investigate challenges faced by the postgraduates' students when utilising the library services in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta

## **Research Question**

1. What library services are you aware that are available in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta?
2. Indicate types of services that you frequently utilised within and outside the Library in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta?
3. What are the challenges you faced when utilizing the library services in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta?

## **Methodology**

The study adopted the positivism approach based on the quantitative methods. The study largely used a survey design. The use of survey design is to encourage and enhances effective gathering of standardised information through the use of questionnaire. The sample was drawn from nine colleges in the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta.

The respondents consisted of post graduate students from the nine colleges. The random sampling technique was used to select the respondents for the study. The essence of using simple technique is to give every participant in the study adequate chances to be included in the sample.

Questionnaires were administered to the postgraduate students in all the colleges and out of 55 questionnaires distributed 45 questionnaires were returned.

## **RESULTS**

The researchers administered 55 copies of the questionnaire, out of which 45 was retrieved, the table below shows result and discuss:

## Analysis of Personal Data

Table 1: Age distribution of respondents

Age	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Below 25	12	27
26-35	14	31
36-45	12	27
46 and above	7	15
Total	45	100

The table above shows the of age the respondents which is below 25years representing 27%, 26-35 representing 31%, 36-45 representing 27% while the remaining 46 and above representing 15% of the respondents.

Table 2: Gender Distribution of the Respondents

Sex	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	19	42
Female	26	58
Total	45	100

From the table above clearly shows that the number of male respondents is 19 representing 42% of the respondents while female is 26 representing 58% of the respondents.

Table 3: College Distribution

College	Respondents	Percentage (%)
COLBIOS	4	9
COLAMRUD	7	16
COLVET	5	11
COLPLANT	6	13
COLPHYS	4	9
COLFHEC	5	11
COLENG	5	11
COLANIM	3	7



COLERM	6	13
TOTAL	45	100

Table 4: Educational Study of Respondents in the Institution

Qualification	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Master's Degree	31	69
Ph.D.	14	31
Others	-	-
Total	45	100

The table above shows that majority of the respondents are Master's degree students with 31 respondents representing 69% while the remaining 31% are Ph.D. students

**Table 5: What types of library services are available in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta?**

Particulars		Questionnaire	
S/N	AWARENESS	Respondent	%
1	Reference Service	31	89
2	Serials	27	77
3	Bibliographic Services:	13	37
4	Borrowing Services	32	91
5	Reserve Book Service	12	34
6	Inter-Library Loan Service	3	9
7	Abstracting service	15	43
8	Current awareness services	21	60
9	Selective dissemination of information services	18	51
10	Reprography services	23	65

	Awareness of IT Resources/ database in the Library	Respondent	%
1	CD-ROM database	9	25
2	Internet	33	94
3	Email	35	100
4	OPAC	21	60
5	AGORA	23	65
6	HINARI	25	71
7	ESBCOHOST	31	89
8.	TEEAL	31	89

Table 5 above revealed the various library services available at federal university of Abeokuta. The study revealed that library services that are highly available are: email services and borrowing services 100%, Internet 94%, reference services 89%, SBCOHOST 89%, TEEAL 89%, serial services 77%, reprographic services 65%, OPAC and current awareness services 60%. However, the respondents indicated some services which they think are not available such as inter-library loan 34%, reserved 9%, and CDROM 25%. Other services indicated by the respondents are abstracting services 43% and Selective dissemination of information services 51%.

**Table 6: Indicate types of services that you frequently utilised within and outside the Library in Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta?**

S/N	Particulars Service Access	Questionnaire	
		Respondents	%
1	Reference Service	29	82
2	Serials	21	60
3	Bibliographic Services	7	20
4	Borrowing Services	31	89
5	Reserve Book Service	9	26
6	Inter-Library Loan Service	1	3
7	Abstracting service	6	17

8	Current awareness services	12	34
9	Selective dissemination services	15	42
10	Reprography services	23	65
	Awareness of IT Resources/ Database in the Library		
11	CD-ROM database	9	26
12	Internet	35	100
13	Email	35	100
14	OPAC	19	54
15	AGORA	23	65
16	HINARI	25	71
17	ESBCOHOST	31	89
18	TEEAL	29	83

Table 6 above indicated the various types of services postgraduate students frequently utilized in Federal university of Abeokuta. From the table above the study revealed that internet services and email services 100%, borrowing services and ESBCOHOST 89%, TEEAL 83%, Reference Service 82% and HINARI 71%. The study further showed that Reprography services and AGORA 65%, Serials 60% and OPAC 54%. However, the study revealed low utilization of some services such as Inter-Library Loan Service 3%, Bibliographic Services 7%, Abstracting service 17%, CD-ROM database 26% and Current awareness services 34%.

**Table 7: RQ5: What are the challenges you faced when utilizing the library services in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta?**

S/N	Particulars Service Access	Questionnaire	
		Respondents	%
1	Non-involvement of users in book selection	31	89
2	Not up to date information resources	32	91
3	Users not informed of new arrival	23	66
4	Inadequate current journals	34	97
5	Poor library instruction	33	94
6	Erratic power supply	35	100
7	Poor Abstracting service	32	91
8	Unavailability of air conditioners	35	100
9	Unfriendly library staff	27	77
10	Inadequate library staff	31	89
11	Poor internet facilities	31	89
12	Poor access to database	29	83
13	Poor library environment	23	66

The table above revealed various challenges faced by postgraduates' students when utilizing library services in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. The study revealed that problem of Non up to date information resources, Inadequate current journals, Erratic power supply, Unavailability of air conditioners and Poor Abstracting service with 91%, 97%, 100%, 100% and 91% respectively. It further revealed the following results Poor library instruction 94%, Poo internet supply 89%, inadequate library staff 89%, Unfriendly library staff 77%, Users not informed of new arrival 66% and Poor access to database 83%.

## **Discussion of the findings**

The discussion of this study is on the findings on awareness and use of library services among postgraduate students in Nigeria, using nine Colleges in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, as a case study. The College of Agricultural Management and Rural Development (COLAMRUD) has the highest respondents. This study revealed that age bracket of majority of the respondents are 26-35 with 31%, this signified that younger adults dominate the postgraduate programme in the study institution. The distribution of respondents by gender indicates that female constitute the majority of the respondents. This finding contradicts the finding by Tusiime, Otara, Kaleebe, Kaviira, and Tsinda, (2017) that male students graduate more than female students in public universities. The findings of this study also revealed that majority of the respondents are studying master degree programme in the institution.

This study revealed that there are various types of library services available in the university library such as email services, internet services, borrowing services, reference service, ESBCOHOST, TEEAL and serial services. This corroborates the findings of Ishola and Obadare (2014) that, library services are available in Nigerian university libraries such as internet, reference services, and borrowing services. In the same vein, John, Fagbe and Egbeyemi, (2018) also confirm that internet services are available in Nigeria libraries.

The findings also revealed that the library services that are frequently utilized by postgraduate students are internet, email, ESBCOHOST, Borrowing Services, TEEAL, Reference Service and AGORA. This corroborates the findings of Korobili, Tilikidou, and Delistavrou, (2006) which revealed that internet, email, and e-resources are services that are frequently utilized in university libraries. Sethi and Panda, (2012) also confirm that e-resources are the services that are frequently utilized by most students in higher institutions using Sambalpur University, India as a case study.

The study also revealed various challenges faced by postgraduates' students when utilizing library services in Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. Such challenges are not up to date information resources, inadequate current journals, erratic power supply, unavailability of air conditioners and poor abstracting service, poor library instruction, poor internet supply,

inadequate library staff, unfriendly library staff, users not informed of new arrival and poor access to database. This is confirmed by the findings of Akporhonor and Akpojoto, (2016) that major challenges confronting postgraduates library students in use of e-resources in Southern Nigeria are epileptic electricity supply, poor network and difficulty in accessing some websites. Also Simmonds (2001), stated several factors that can impede user's satisfaction; which include responsiveness, competence and assurances, tangibles of resources.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

It was revealed that the postgraduate students are aware of various services rendered in the university library. Borrowing of library materials is the most patronised services and email is also use very well by the students. The major problems facing the users in the use of library services are lack of current books and journals. Like-wise, unstable power supply is also identified. Base on the findings of the study. The following recommendations are made.

There is need for library management to subscribe to current books and journals. Alternative sources of power supply need to be provided such as solar energy. In addition, the library environment needs to be conducive to uses adequate provision should be made for air-conditioner. Adequate survey of user's satisfaction should be carried out frequently to determine the value of services and the area that needs improvement. The library management should frequently organize library programmes that will be creating awareness to users on various services been render in the library. This w will assist in promoting the image of the library thereby users will be aware of various benefit they can derive from using the library services.

The limitation of the study lay on the fact that it is a pilot study as a result the respondents were not many. In addition, the study is limited to the post graduate students at the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, as a result the findings may not be generalized. There is a need for the study on the awareness and use of library services among undergraduate students in the various universities in the country.

The implication of this study is that it provides fresh data to the library management on the awareness and use of library services by the post graduate students. Furthermore, the study will be useful for policy makers in the library and also it contributes to literature.





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